

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 201622
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R 092139Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, ASEC, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET EMBASSY PARKING PROBLEM

REF: (A) MOSCOW 18298 (NOTAL), (B) STATE 190869

1. SOVIET EMBASSY PARKING SITUATION HAS BEEN DISCUSSED AT GREAT LENGTH WITH SOVIET EMBASSY CONSULAR SECTION IN WASHINGTON, AND WE ARE NOT RPT NOT IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE RECIPROCITY FOR THE PARKING SITUATION IN MOSCOW, ANY MORE THAN THEY CAN OFFER RECIPROCITY FOR AVAILABILITY OF UNLIMITED APARTMENTS, SHOPPING CENTERS, SERVICE STATIONS, MACDONALDS, OR ANY NUMBER OF OTHER AMENITIES IN THE UNITED STATES. PARKING SITUATION IS PROBABLY UNIQUE AS AN ASPECT OF LIFE WHICH IS INFINITELY BETTER IN USSR THAN IN U.S.

2. IN AN EFFORT TO RESPOND TO REF A APPROACH AS CONSTRUCTIVE
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PAGE 02 STATE 201622

TIMELY AS POSSIBLE, WE SUGGEST YOU DRAW FROM FOLLOWING:

A. THERE IS NOTHING DEPARTMENT CAN DO TO IMPROVE THE ON-STREET FREE PARKING SITUATION IN THE CONGESTED NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY ON SIXTEENTH STREET IN WASHINGTON.

B. DEPARTMENT HAS URGED FOR SOME TIME THAT THE SOVIET

EMBASSY RENT OFF-STREET PARKING, AND HAS OFFERED TO HELP THE EMBASSY FIND SPACE TO RENT.

C. PARKING COSTS ARE A NORMAL EXPENSE OF OPERATING IN AMERICAN CITIES. STATE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES DO NOT ENJOY FREE PARKING. EVEN ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF STATE PAY FOR THEIR PARKING PLACES AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

D. THERE ARE SOME LIVING CONDITIONS IN WHICH THE TWO COUNTRIES CANNOT RECIPROCATATE. THE UNITED STATES OFFERS CERTAIN AMENITIES WHICH ARE NO; AVAILABLE IN MOSCOW. WE CANNOT PROVIDE FREE DOWNTOWN PARKING TO DIPLOMATS OR TO ANYONE BEYOND THE FEW RESERVED SPACES NOW ALLOTTED.

E. WASHINGTON NOW HAS A METRO SYSTEM WHICH IS CONVENIENT TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY AND IN STAGE OF EXPANSION. IT IS NOTHING LIKE THE MOSCOW SYSTEM IN SIZE AND OVERALL CONVENIENCE, BUT COULD CERTAINLY BE USED BY SOME OF THE SOVIET PERSONNEL WHO NOW DRIVE TO WORK EVERY DAY.

F. SOVIET EMBASSY PARKING VIOLATIONS ARE A RECURRING IRRITANT IN THE EMBASSY'S RELATIONS WITH THE DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON POLICE, AND PUBLIC. MANY OF THE VIOLATIONS ARE AT PLACES OTHER THAN NEAR THE EMBASSY.

G. WE REITERATE OUR WILLINGNESS TO HELP THE SOVIETS FIND OFF-STREET PARKING TO RENT.
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PAGE 03 STATE 201622

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